

REMARKS

1. Claims Amendments.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of Claims 2 and 3 and part of Claim 4, and to correct some grammar. No new matter has been added.

Claim 2 has been cancelled and its subject matter incorporated into Claim 1.

Claim 3 has been cancelled and its subject matter incorporated into Claim 1.

Claim 4 has been amended to delete certain features that have been incorporated into Claim 1, and to rearrange some wording to be more readable. No new matter has been added.

Claim 5 has been amended to more positively recite the additional step of the method. No new matter has been added.

Claim 6 has been amended to improve the readability of the claim, to more positively recite the additional step of the method, and to delete certain features. No new matter has been added..

Claims 7-24 have been cancelled. Applicant is prosecuting the method claims in this patent application and reserves the right to refile the device claims (Claims 7-23) in a divisional patent application.

New Claim 25 claims the features removed from Claim 6 and depends from Claim 6. No new matter has been added.

New Claim 26 is a combination of the features of Claims 1-6. No new matter has been added.

New Claim 27 claims a feature of Claim 4. No new matter has been added.

No new matter has been added in any of the amendments to the Claims.

2. Discussion of Prior Rejections Under 35 CFR 102.

Claims 10-11 were rejected under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by DE 101 19 835 to Grunewald (Grunewald '835). Claims 13 and 24 were rejected under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by US Patent No. 4,236,222 to Hastings (Hastings '222). As these claims have been cancelled, this ground of rejection is moot.

3. Discussion of Prior Rejections Under 35 USC 103.

Claims 1-9 were rejected under 35 USC 103 as being obvious over Grantham '865 and Ross '841. Applicant traverses this rejection. The combination of Grantham '865 and Ross '841 fails to teach Claims 1-9 because this combination fails to teach the currently claimed method in which:

the drum is driven in rotation
the drum is loaded with the laundry
the laundry is uniformly distributed onto an inner circumference of the drum
the laundry and drum are spun at a circumferential speed such that a centrifugal acceleration that is greater than 600 times gravitational acceleration acts on the laundry to remove liquid from the laundry
the drum is loaded in a position in which drainage of the liquid in the laundry also takes place
the loading of the drum is carried out with the drum rotating at a speed that is reduced as compared with the spinning of the laundry to remove the liquid
In contrast, Grantham '865 discloses a traditional laundry dryer and Ross '841 teaches a compact household-sized spin dryer. Both of these dryers are common household dryers that do not and would not produce a centrifugal acceleration which is higher than 600 times gravitational acceleration – these are dryers and not hydroextraction devices. If a centrifugal spinner (14) of the type in Ross '841 or Grantham '841 were operated at 3,500 rpm (as disclosed), the centrifugal force would be substantially less than 600 times gravitation acceleration. See, e.g., Ross '841 Col. 5, lines 46-51.

Applicant has found that it is preferable to load the drum while it is rotating, but that the rotation preferably is reduced when compared to an increased rotation speed when the laundry is being drained of liquid. One reason for this is because if only a portion of the drum's inner circumference contains laundry, rotating the drum at high speeds can be detrimental as it is much more advantageous for the laundry to be evenly spaced about the inner circumference. Thus, reducing the speed of rotation during loading allows a more even distribution of the laundry.

Applicant also has found it advantageous to load the drum in the same position as the drainage position as the drum cannot be pivoted from a loading position into an oblique drainage position without decelerating the drum, which is time consuming. Therefore, the invention also allows for loading the drum in the position in which the drainage also is performed.

Thus, when compared to Ross '841 and Grantham '865, the present invention is patentably distinct. Ross '841 is a commercial machine for drainage of a large amount of laundry at once. Grantham '865 is a laundry dryer for laundry that is already drained of liquid. Hence, there are completely different operational requirements for the Ross '841 machine and the Grantham '865 machine than there are for the present invention.

For example, the Ross '841 device is a spin dryer for home use and is not capable of the forces disclosed and claimed in the present invention. Also, the Ross '841 drum is not driven during the loading of the laundry, thus preventing the laundry from being evenly distributed on the inner circumference of the drum. As the Ross '841 drum has a vertical axis, the laundry accumulates on the bottom of the drum and not the circumference.

Without Applicant's invention steps, one of ordinary skill in the art would not be taught that laundry can be hydroextracted using a centrifugal force would be substantially less than 600 times gravitation acceleration. As such, Applicant submits that the claims as currently pending are not obvious over Grantham '841 and Ross '841, and Applicant requests that the examiner withdraw the rejection to the claims based on Grantham '841 and Ross '841.

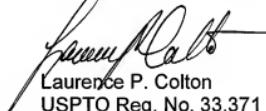
Claims 14-16 were rejected under 35 USC 103 as being obvious over Hastings '222. As these claims have been cancelled, this ground of rejection is moot.

Claims 17-23 have been rejected under 35 USC 103 as being obvious over Hastings '222 and Erickson '037. As these claims have been cancelled, this ground of rejection is moot.

CONCLUSION

Applicants submit that the patent application is in condition for examination and allowance and respectfully request such actions. If the examiner has any questions that can be answered by telephone, please contact the patent attorney of record at the new contact address and telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
SMITH, GAMBRELL & RUSSELL, LLP



Laurence P. Colton
USPTO Reg. No. 33,371

SMITH, GAMBRELL & RUSSELL, LLP
1230 Peachtree Street, NW, Suite 3100
Atlanta GA 30309

Tel: 404.815.3681
Fax: 404.685.6981
E-Mail: lcolton@sgrlaw.com